

333 AD

Old St Peter's built

1912 Dates J-BK

333

St Ambrose was born

C 333

1912 Dates J-BK

SAMARIA

Alexander the Great captured the town
and after killing and expelling many
of the inhabitants replaced them
with Macedonian colonists

333 AD

Church of the Sepulcher was
begun before 333 AD. It was
destroyed by the Persians in 613
then rebuilt and re-built
in subsequent centuries

333 AD

THE CHRISTMAS CYCLE

A second cycle of feasts, this time a fixed one, was introduced sometime after the movable Easter cycle. The earliest mention of an anniversary of the birth of Christ on Christmas day (December 25) is in the so-called Philocalian Calendar, in which the entry, which may be dated to 336, reads

VII. Kal. Ian. natus Christus in Betleem, Iudeac.

Probably the date was chosen to offset the imperial feast of the Natalis solis invicti (the birthday of the unvanquished sun), with its Mithraic

wertness. The Christological controversies of the 4th and 5th centuries doubtless contributed to the growth in importance of the feast; it aided also in lessening of thoroughly more important feast of the EPIPHANY to a point at which it became part of the Christmas cycle which, evolving in Africa some time between 380 and 530 passed into Spain, and thence to Italy. Advent which now prefices the cycle appears to have been introduced at Rome by Pope Simplicius or Pope Gelasius I in the 2nd half of the 5th century.